

Madam Speaker,

Everyday my constituents share with me their personal stories. I often hear about their passport or mortgage troubles. But, perhaps more than any other concern, they tell me of their families' struggles to stay healthy or to get treatment when they become sick without health insurance. They tell me how they have worked all their lives only to lose their retirement savings when they need serious medical treatment.

These stories are unacceptable- just as it is unacceptable that one in five Americans are uninsured. Now is the time to act. For each day we delay, an additional 14,000 Americans lose coverage.

There are four items that we must include in the final legislation to fix our health care system. First, we must ensure coverage so that everyone has access to health care. Second, we must improve the quality of care. Third, we must contain costs while investing in preventative care. Finally, individuals must be guaranteed their choice of health insurance plans and doctors.

If we can pass a bill that incorporates these four principles, we will have made a real and lasting impact on people's lives.